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ABSTRACT

This volume of essays responds to What Matters Most: Teaching for America's Future, a 1996 report of the National Commission on Teaching & America's Future (NCTAF). The report says that every child has the right to a caring, competent, and qualified teacher. As a result, politicians and educators strove to implement its recommendations in order to begin building an infrastructure of good teaching. The foreword to this volume (David G. Imig) suggests there is no need for another model program or demonstration project, but rather a systemic response that will enable novices to learn to teach more powerfully than before. The purpose of this volume is to examine efforts of leaders at each level of the educational enterprise as they consider NCTAF report recommendations. Chapter 1, "Creative Solutions for Essential Change: Newark Public Schools," (Beverly L. Hall) discusses change and innovation, highlighting New Jersey's takeover of the Newark public schools. Chapter 2, "Audacious Goal or Deja Vu?" (Karen S. Gallagher) acknowledges the familiarity of NCTAF recommendations but finds five major transformative changes that may be fruitful. Chapter 3, "Give and Take: NCTAF and Indiana's Partnership," (Marilyn M. Scannell) provides a rationale for using the NCTAF report to further one's own ends and discusses how to bring the new system of performance licensing to scale, emphasizing the importance of coalition building and adaptation of national agendas to fit local needs. Chapter 4, "Professional Development at the Center of School Reform," (Dennis Sparks) describes the National Staff Development Council's work to create standards providing a benchmark for accomplished practice that can guide professional development and school improvement. An afterword, "Building Capacity for 'What Matters Most'," (Linda Darling-Hammond) addresses the issues of developing organizational capacity, conducting

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efforts in a decentralized system, and conflicts arising from competing constitutencies and goals for education. (Contains 37 references.) (SM)

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Putting the National Commission Report into Action

ED 417 156

Of Course It Matters

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Edited by Mary E. Dilworth

ERIC Clearinghouse on Teaching and Teacher Education
American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education

Putting the National Commission Report into Action

Of Course It Matters

A volume of essays in response to
What Matters Most: Teaching for America's Future,
a report of the National Commission on Teaching & America's Future

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Foreword

David G. Imig

Since *What Matters Most: Teaching for America's Future* was released in September 1996, there have been significant efforts to build an infrastructure for good teaching. The report of the National Commission on Teaching & America's Future (NCTAF) said that every child has the right to a caring, competent, and qualified teacher. Establishing this as the right of every child was so basic, so understandable, and so compelling that politicians and educators embraced the report and sought to implement its recommendations. This goal of ensuring that every child will have the kind of teacher that is necessary to enable them to reach the high standards policymakers are describing and educators are seeking to develop, prompted unprecedented effort.

The contributors to this volume recognize there is no need for another model program or a demonstration project, but rather a significant and systemic response that will enable novices to learn to teach in much more powerful ways than we have been accustomed to. Scaling-up the enterprise to respond to these demands is the challenge. Indeed, I am struck by Beverly Hall's use of the state takeover of the Newark (NJ) Public Schools as the frame for her examination of change and innovation. Hall describes the merits inherent in the takeover that "facilitated a process of reform unencumbered by the typical obstacles of patronage and the politics of status quo." Her study is, in one way, an extension of both Gallagher's and Scannell's examination of the change process and the importance of external instruments to reinforce local efforts.

However, this raises what could be a troubling aspect—that of "picking and choosing" those parts of the external agenda to further one's own ends. What this really does is bring into question how much adherence or consistency one must derive from the externally imposed agenda to say one fully subscribes to it. When Hall describes New Jersey Commissioner of Education Leo Klagholz's recent policy paper on the continuing education of teachers as "mirroring" that of the National Commission, she also highlights

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the similarity of solutions to complex problems being offered across the country; e.g., lots of people at many different parts of the education enterprise are saying remarkably similar things.

Karen Gallagher, the dean of the School of Education at the University of Kansas, acknowledges the familiarity of NCTAF recommendations but at the same time finds five major transformative changes she believes will be fruitful. Her concern is that *What Matters Most* calls for the total commitment of faculty to change every aspect of the program and she is apprehensive whether her sense of urgency is widely shared.

Scannell provides both a rationale for "using" *What Matters Most: Teaching for America's Future* to further one's own ends as well as a way to bring the new system of performance licensing to scale. Her study emphasizes the importance of coalition building and the selective adaptation of national agendas to fit local needs and realities.

Finally, Dennis Sparks takes one of the most important concepts from *What Matters Most*: professional development, and describes the work of the National Staff Development Council to build a set of standards "to provide a benchmark for accomplished practice that can guide the professional development and school improvement process."

This volume, in many ways, shows us how major national initiatives, such as the NCTAF, actually do trigger and influence constructive activity towards the improvement of teacher education, teaching practice, school conditions and most importantly student achievement.

Introduction

The National Commission on Teaching & America's Future, formed in 1994 and chaired by Governor James B. Hunt, Jr., was funded by the Rockefeller Foundation and Carnegie Corporation of New York. Following its mission "to provide an action agenda for meeting America's educational challenges, connecting the quest for higher student achievement with the need for teachers who are knowledgeable, skillful, and committed to meeting the needs of all students," the National Commission issued *What Matters Most: Teaching for America's Future* in September 1996.

In its own words, the National Commission proposes an "audacious goal for America's future": to provide every student access to competent, caring, qualified teaching in schools organized for success—by the year 2006. This goal flows from three basic premises held by the National Commission:

- What teachers know and can do is the most important influence on what students learn.
- Recruiting, preparing, and retaining good teachers is the central strategy for improving our schools.
- School reform cannot succeed unless it focuses on creating the conditions in which teachers can teach, and teach well.

However, there are barriers to achieving the audacious goal: "low expectations for student performance, unenforced standards for teachers, major flaws in teacher preparation, painfully slipshod teacher recruitment, inadequate induction for beginning teachers, lack of professional development and rewards for knowledge and skill, and schools that are structured for failure rather than success." To overcome these barriers, the National Commission proposes five major recommendations:

I. Get serious about standards, for both students and teachers.

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II. Reinvent teacher preparation and professional development.

III. Fix teacher recruitment and put qualified teachers in every classroom.

IV. Encourage and reward teacher knowledge and skill.

V. Create schools that are organized for student and teacher success.

First, in 12 "launch" states[1], and then in virtually every other state, there have been efforts to create the infrastructure to support and sustain good teaching. Throughout the education community there have been efforts to consider the recommendations of *What Matters Most* and to put them into place at the school, district, state, and university levels.

The purpose of this publication is to examine the efforts of leaders at each level of the educational enterprise as they consider recommendations contained in *What Matters Most*. Four individuals with considerable experience leading various aspects of the educational enterprise were asked to highlight what they believe was most significant in the report: a school district superintendent, the dean of a major school of education, the executive director of a state professional standards board, and the head of a major national education association. While there is unanimous agreement on the merits of pursuing the NCTAF agenda, each contributor signals the difficulty of changing the educational enterprise to support it. It is hoped that this volume will contribute to the ongoing conversation, in many sectors, towards the improvement of educational practice.

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[1]The 12 launch states are: Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Missouri, Montana, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma

I

Creative Solutions for Essential Change: Newark Public Schools

Beverly L. Hall

In the fall of 1995, *Teachers College Record* published a study by Jean Anyon (1995), which profiled one particular school in Newark, New Jersey. The school Anyon profiled in the study was, at the time of her work, a typical Newark school by many accounts. The image she conveys is one of teachers who have alarmingly low expectations of their students and who function within a completely dysfunctional system. Particularly striking are the field notes to which Anyon refers throughout her article that depict the "verbal humiliation and degradation, directed at students" (1995, p. 81). These incidents of profane and disrespectful comments teachers direct at students are indicative of the dysfunction of an entire system.

While Anyon's work concentrates on discovering the impact of socio-economic class, race, and culture on the process of educational reform in one particular school, she does make interesting observations applicable to a general discussion of reform and more specifically to teacher accountability. She notes that in her study, teachers' expectations of successful reform are virtually non-existent. Reform strategies are imported with little attention to adaptation to local culture. Professional development, part of the reform process, is mandated, with little or no attempt to include all stakeholders. Even attempts at increasing teacher accountability are misguided and fail.

The state of New Jersey heavily regulates all aspects of its policy-driven mechanisms, including the State Department of Education. The department monitors its schools by a process that is "designed to ensure that all districts have in place the elements of a thorough and efficient educational system and are meeting state standards" (New Jersey State Department of Education, 1994, p. 0007.) During the summer just prior to the publication of Anyon's study, the state, having conducted an intensive investigation of the

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Newark School District, found just cause to take over the system and replaced the Board of Education with a state-operated school district. Apparently the state's monitoring process discovered the same dysfunction described in Anyon's research.

Among the findings that led to state takeover of the Newark Public Schools were deficiencies in staffing:

> *A number of teachers and other professional staff members are uncertified or inappropriately certified for their current assignments; some were observed to lack an understanding of the subjects they were teaching and to give misinformation for children to copy into their notebooks.* (New Jersey State Department of Education, 1994, p. 0011)

The previous is but one example of the deficiencies found to exist in the area of educational programs. Further deficiencies were cited in governance, finance, and management. New Jersey's largest school district experienced a trickle-down effect as a result of gross mismanagement. Over the years, corruption and dysfunction at the upper-most levels of the system were manifested at the classroom level. Poor performance by leadership led to poor performance by teachers, which resulted in poor performance by students, the standard by which the public most readily measures the success of its schools.

The state's takeover of the district has facilitated a process of reform unencumbered by the typical obstacles of patronage and the politics of status quo. To a certain extent, the state wiped clean the slate in order that necessary changes could be instituted as quickly and as efficiently as possible. Newark was given 5 years to turn around and the clock began ticking July, 1995.

District-wide Reform

More than engaging in the typical remodeling often undertaken by failing districts, the system in Newark demands that drastic *reconstruction* occur. The unique position in which the district finds itself under state takeover affords it the opportunity to focus on the things that matter most, *first*. The State Department of Education, while offering its guidance and support in facilitating a process of change, has allowed the district to design its own blueprint and course of action—the Strategic Plan. (State support is an important factor, not to be overlooked by districts with characteristics similar to Newark's who are undertaking reform.)

The reconstruction team in Newark recognizes the significance and value of including all constituency groups in the reform process. Parent and

community groups, businesses and foundations, school-based staff, central office staff, and students were all consulted and included in planning stages and continue to be active participants in the implementation phases of the reform process. The community-at-large has joined the school community in working to achieve the district's ultimate goal—raising standards to high and sustainable levels, which will allow return of the district to local board control.

The mission of the Newark Public Schools is to provide a quality education that fosters a philosophy of critical thinking and that equips graduates with the skills needed to be productive citizens. High academic and ethical standards, high expectations, and equal access to programs that inspire a variety of interests and abilities for all students define the educational focus. Again, the accountability and commitment of all segments of the community are crucial antecedents to learning (Newark Public Schools, 1996).

Those aspects of Newark's educational system in most desperate need of immediate attention are outlined in the Strategic Plan. The district's blueprint for reform, the Strategic Plan, addresses key elements, identified through research, that will allow the district to provide a rich educational environment for all students in Newark (Newark Public Schools, 1996). Implicit in each of the Strategic Plan's 11 objectives is increased accountability of all constituent groups because the dedication of students, teachers, administrators, parents, and community are essential to ensuring a quality education for all students.

While the 11 objectives deal with a range of issues, among the most vital is improving the quality and caliber of the teaching staff. Objective 5, "Staff Development," and Objective 10, "Delivery of Goods, Services and Resources" (which addresses human resource services), are two that are will affect teacher performance. (For the purposes of responding to the National Commission's report, discussion will primarily focus on these objectives.)

There are essentially two basic approaches to improving teacher performance. One through the recruitment process—only select the best, most qualified professionals who have been well-prepared for their position. The other, possibly more challenging approach, is build the capacity of existing staff. Newark is doing both.

Teacher Recruitment

Newark recognizes the need for "creating more proactive and streamlined recruitment and hiring systems" (National Commission, 1996, p. 38) and has addressed the issue in Strategic Plan Objective 10. The district is committed to creating higher standards in all aspects of the education system. In recruitment practices, raising standards has led the district to implement consistently a more effective screening process in order to eliminate political

influence in hiring, a common practice in the past. In addition, procedures have been instituted enabling staffing decisions to be made at the school level, which gives building-level administrators more control over their own staffing needs (Newark Public Schools, 1996).

In 1997, a committee was formed to develop a recruitment package and plan to attract candidates who may not typically consider the Newark Public Schools among their choices for employment. The District's Division of Human Resources actively participates in a number of job fairs throughout the year and targets special populations for recruitment. Newark also recognizes, as stated in the National Commission's report, that throughout the nation "teachers of color are in short supply" (1996, p. 39.) And while Newark Public Schools rates "above average" when compared to the typical New Jersey district in terms of numbers of teachers of color, they are still underrepresented. We seek to improve these rates because we recognize that role models play an important part in the development of our students. So in response, we have begun a campaign to increase our recruitment efforts beyond the area colleges and universities to include the historically Black colleges (Newark Public Schools, 1997).

Perhaps most significant to the district's plan for streamlining the hiring process is the development of on-line computer access to the state's VAX system. Such a system will allow the Division of Human Resourese immediate access to certification information for prospective candidates, thereby facilitating the hiring process (Newark Public Schools, 1997, p. 47). The proper use of technology will most certainly move the district in the right direction.

Professional Development

We recognize professional development in this district as so essential to improved teacher performance (and so to the reform process), that Objective 5 in the Strategic Plan is entirely dedicated to the topic. The goal of this objective is to develop a comprehensive staff development plan by establishing guidelines for all staff development programs and through the creation of an infrastructure to coordinate staff development across the district. As outlined in the Strategic Plan, the district has placed staff developers in 90 percent of elementary schools to support teachers and building-level administrators. In addition, the district will continue to provide staff development to central office staff. The district will continue its collaborative staff development activities with institutions of higher learning located throughout the Newark area. Included among these endeavors is the Principals' Leadership Institute for continuing professional development for principals and vice-principals offered in collaboration with a number of local colleges and universities (Newark Public Schools, 1996).

Rebuilding the teaching capacity of veteran teachers can be a daunting task, especially in a district with a tradition of failed attempts at reform. As many teachers across districts will attest, professional development efforts, especially as part of reform movements, prove time and again to communicate and endorse methods that are fads, and consequently are failed attempts to provide quick fixes to complicated problems. Even proven teaching methods are communicated poorly in one-shot workshops when what is needed is ongoing training and follow-up support. Perhaps the single most challenging aspect of retraining is the motivation factor—convincing the teachers that updating teaching practices is in the best interest of the children.

Newark's philosophy of staff development seeks to avoid the one-shot workshop and concentrates instead on the needs expressed by teachers, linking approaches, as the report suggests, to "concrete problems of practice and built into teachers' ongoing work with their colleagues" (National Commission, 1996, p. 41). Research has demonstrated the failure of the "spray and pray" approach, any benefits possibly provided being short-lived. Professional development should occur over time and rely on teacher input to increase motivation and ensure buy-in. The goal of professional development is to build capacity, not increased reliance on permanent coordinators and specialists who could better serve as classroom teachers.

One example of work being done in Newark is a series of workshops that create linkages to the Core Content Curriculum Standards currently being implemented across the state of New Jersey. Teachers are encouraged to develop alternative methods of teaching in order to bring students to the levels required by the standards. As the National Commission's report points out, the implications student standards have on teachers are many, and "teaching to the new standards" will require expanding current practices (1996, pp. 76-77).

The National Commission's report recommends that beginning teachers be treated like students of a medical residency, given support and guidance by an experienced expert of the field (1996, p. 81). New teachers with provisional certification in this state are required to take part in a mentoring program of a specified number of hours throughout the first year of teaching, to be spent with a veteran teacher who has been selected by the faculty as the "building mentor." All first-year teachers, whether from the traditional or alternate route, are required to take part in a mentoring program and will not be recommended for certification unless the mentor program is successfully completed. Alternate route teachers are required additional support and mentor-instruction time to ensure proper preparation. The mentor becomes a peer coach to the new teacher, providing support and guidance (Newark Public Schools, 1995, p. 10).

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Encouraging and Rewarding Knowledge and Skill

Perhaps as vital as professional development and teacher recruitment, is the need to foster the development of a culture that values its teachers. Several strategies outlined in the Strategic Plan aim to accomplish this by developing a fair and comprehensive performance standards and evaluation system for staff, providing appropriate and ongoing staff development, and formally recognizing and honoring support staff and teachers.

It is perhaps this area that is most easily overlooked, even by a district under reform. Recommendations made by the National Commission's report include such ideas as "develop[ing] a career continuum for teaching linked to assessments and compensation systems that reward knowledge and skill" and "remov[ing] incompetent teachers" (1996, pp. 94-98). The National Commission's recommendations will be considered as the District continues to develop a standards and evaluation system.

[New Jersey's State Board of Education recently proposed a continuing education requirement for its teachers (Klagholz, 1997.) The concept is addressed below, as it concerns state policy guidelines more so than district procedures.]

Schools Organized for Success

"Traditional schools," the National Commission report says, "have come to suffer from three major flaws" (1996, p. 45). These are identified as misuse of time, staff, and money. The National Commission goes on to report that schools restructuring to bring control to the building level are "much more likely to report they [are] engaged in important educational changes," (p. 49) many of which address the shortfalls of the traditional school. Since the state takeover, efforts have concentrated on shifting the locus of control, as well as economic and human capital, from downtown bureaucratic hierarchies to building-level School Core Teams. These teams are comprised of representatives of various school-related constituencies (including principals, teachers, parents, union representatives, and students), who will ultimately handle most of the building-level planning decisions.

It is expected that the School Core Teams will continue to evolve over time, and through proper training increase their level of skill and competence to best meet the needs of the schools they serve. School-based decision-making/planning is a process that must be nurtured if it is to succeed. We have no illusions about the complexity of the process and have found that the one obstacle to overcome is an inherent mistrust of the system that has been fostered over time. In order to change successfully traditional uses of time, staff, and money, school-based decision-making teams need to believe that they are capable of influencing their schools and should do so creatively, trusting that what they know to be pedagogically sound is best for their schools. This change of culture will come with time.

Shifting control of resources and programmatic decisions to local sites will not be successful without good building leadership. One of the first initiatives in reconstructing the district entailed evaluation of every principal, and prompt removal of those who did not meet the rigorous qualifications and high standards. As previously mentioned, on-going professional leadership development is provided through the Principals Leadership Institute.

Substantial resources, both financial and human, have been invested in developing a technology infrastructure to meet the needs of the entire district. From the classroom to the main office to the central office, technology is being implemented to use information more efficiently and soundly. Staff are being trained to use the technology "in ways that could optimize teaching and learning for both students and teachers" (National Commission, 1996, p. 45).

This is being accomplished through intensive site-based workshops, appropriate follow-up, and ongoing technical support. Technology has been identified as a district priority with appropriate funding targeted.

Policy Issues at the State Level

In the discussion about professional teaching standards and the ties to licensing, state departments of education cannot be overlooked because many of the decisions to be made will need to occur at the state level in the policy-making arena. Clearly, local districts will play an important role in developing that policy because, as the National Commission states: "If the actions of federal and state governments do not support the work of school districts, and if those school districts do not support the work of schools, very little of worth can be accomplished" (1996, p. 62). The argument can be easily made that the reverse is true as well: schools must support districts, who in turn support state and federal governments. But given the financial and legal implications of policy decisions that concern initial and subsequent license renewal, the role of the state must be acknowledged. States' responsibilities in issuing licenses necessitates that they lead the charge to improve teaching when the approach to that improvement is linking standards to licensing.

Recently, the commissioner of education of New Jersey issued a policy paper on the continuing education for teachers in this state (Klagholz, 1997). A resolution outlining the policy's primary points and resolving to take the necessary steps toward implementing the Commissioner's recommendations accompanied the paper's release (Klagholz & Woodruff, 1997). Most of the commissioner's recommendations mirror those of the National Commission on Teaching & America's Future. One particularly striking overlap is the correlation between student learning standards and teacher (learning and teaching) standards.

Evident throughout the National Commission's report is the concept that student standards may drive teaching standards because "students will

not be able to achieve higher standards of learning unless teachers are prepared to teach in new ways and schools are prepared to support high-quality teaching" (1996, p. 27). New Jersey's education commissioner and the State Board of Education seem to agree. Their proposal for the continuing education of teachers assumes that higher standards for students may require new knowledge and teaching strategies for teachers. As stated previously in this essay, New Jersey has recently instituted state-wide Core Curriculum Content Standards that intend to raise the level of expectation and learning for all students. The commissioner's proposal expresses that one role of the state is to protect the best interest of the public and as such, responsibility falls to the state to ensure "that every teacher possess and be able to apply all of the knowledge and skills needed to deliver effectively the education that is defined by [the] standards" (Klagholz, 1997, p. 6). The ability to teach to high standards must be kept current through continuing teacher development and education if students are to be expected to achieve to high standards. License renewal will be contingent upon that continuing education. New Jersey proposes a number of means for ensuring the continuing learning of teachers that includes but is not limited to course work offered by colleges, professional associations, individual school districts, groups of districts, training institutes, and others (Klagholz, 1997, p. 10). License renewal, as it has been proposed, would occur every 5 years.

Where New Jersey differs from the National Commission's report is in enforcing the standards for licensing. New Jersey proposes to maintain the responsibility for enforcing licensing and relicensing procedures primarily through the use of state evaluators who would ensure that newly learned skills and concepts are actually being implemented in the classroom (Klagholz, 1997, pp. 12-13). The "what" of that to be evaluated is not disputed. The "how" is where the differences, and perhaps the debates, will surface because the National Commission's report favors a procedure whereby teaching standards are monitored by an independent national organization. New Jersey, however, (and possibly other states) expresses a desire to maintain control over this procedure (Bradley, 1997, p. 7). Will states agree to this concept? Further discussion will be necessary before a determination can be made.

Policy Issues II: Cross-Interest Collaborations

The recommendations for addressing the concerns raised throughout the National Commission's report will require the coordination and cooperation of various segments of our profession: state education agencies, local education agencies (school boards and local districts), institutes of higher education, and professional associations, including teachers' unions. While the National Commission's recommendations are logical and forward thinking, they do not go so far as to recommend real strategies for overcoming the

history of discord and lack of coordination among these sectors of the education arena.

Newark, as a state-operated district, has a distinct advantage. We are forced into close collaboration with the State Department of Education, which has, forcibly perhaps, the district's best interest at heart because the success or failure of Newark Public Schools will be a reflection of the state. Our relationship with the state as an education agency is fixed for the coming years. This allows us to turn our attentions toward developing relationships with two other segments of the profession so crucial to the success of the district. We must now discover ways of effectively and productively working with institutes of higher education and with teachers' unions.

Teacher Preparation

The Newark Public Schools has worked with area colleges and universities for many years. Since the district has been under state takeover, the confidence of the area colleges and universities seems to have increased and requests for student-teacher placements in the District have risen dramatically. The district's Office of Staff Development reports that requests for placements have gone from a semester average of 25 to well over 100.

As a district with special needs, we are particularly concerned with teacher preparation programs and desire reassurances that the products of these programs will be qualified and effective teachers. More work needs to be done to identify ways in which districts can help institutes of higher education shape their teacher preparation programs so that the needs of the district are met. Districts deal in practice not theory, and can more readily and easily identify the typical shortcomings of new teachers, especially those shortcomings attributable to lack of preparation. And while many of the needs of new teachers can be (and must be, given current practices) addressed in new teacher induction programs and new teacher mentor programs, much of the work could and should be completed at the university.

As a result of a collaborative between the Newark Public Schools and Montclair State University, the university has enhanced its offerings to meet the needs of districts like Newark. Montclair State has been training Newark teachers as part of a mathematics initiative. The first cohort of teachers participating in the program, inspired to continue their development, independently chose to further their education and were awarded a "middle grades mathematics endorsement" by the college upon completion of their studies. Montclair, recognizing this to be a value to all teachers, expanded its offerings of the middle grades mathematics endorsement to include all of their college students, not just those who entered as a result of the mathematics collaborative with Newark. Taking this one step further, the college is currently seeking to have this endorsement sanctioned by the state. This

experience is one example of the role districts can play in shaping the way colleges and universities prepare the teachers who will serve in our districts.

Labor Relations

The unusual circumstances of this district's reality has created tension between district administration and the local teachers' union. A challenge to the status quo has been met by the unions with expected apprehension. After years of close collaboration between teachers' organizations and the central district administration, the state's takeover and the sweeping changes brought with it, have threatened traditions and disturbed levels of comfort that had been established over time.

All sectors of the education system must accept responsibility for the systemic failure of Newark schools. But, just as importantly, all sectors must accept responsibility for systemic improvement of the schools. There is perhaps no stronger sector than the unions, which represent those who are closest to our clients, the students. Work reported by Kerchner (1996) and others on the evolving professionalism of teachers' organizations gives us hope that we can work together, unions and administration, toward resolving the issues that will impede reform.

In the discussion over licensing and more specifically, license renewal (see discussion above), cooperation with unions could do much to facilitate the process of ensuring continued teacher development. For example, moving toward a system of performance-based assessment of teaching skills would certainly prove beneficial to measuring a wide range of teachers' abilities (National Commission, 1996, p. 72). Union cooperation and collaboration with regard to instituting such a system would ease the transition to a new form of teacher performance evaluation and assessment.

The National Commission offers solid thinking on the possibilities of improving "the system," were its recommendations (or adapted variations of them) instituted in far-reaching ways. While maintaining a realistic focus, we should avoid the pitfalls of the "why we can't" syndrome. Focus instead should be on what can be done to make this all work. This will mean struggling to bring together the varied interests to common ground, relinquishing turf, and sacrificing for the benefit of educating the children.

Conclusions

The goal for America's schools, proposed by the National Commission, is that by the year 2006, "we will provide every student . . . with what should be his or her educational birthright: access to competent, caring, qualified teaching in schools organized for success" (1996, p. vi). Not only can we not argue with this goal, the Newark Public Schools own motto, "Student Success Is Job One," can only be a reality if our teachers are

competent, caring, and qualified and only if our schools are organized for success.

The barriers to achieving the goal, which are identified in the National Commission's report, are all evident in Newark to varying degrees. Low expectations, major flaws in teacher preparation, inadequate induction for beginning teachers, and schools that are structured for failure rather than for success are but some of the problems that contributed to the decline of the schools in Newark. Each, however, is being addressed in the district's reconstruction.

When Jean Anyon concluded her study just 2 years ago (1995), she indicated that change in Newark would be nearly impossible, if not totally hopeless unless the negative impacts of poverty and racial isolation are resolved. Yet Anyon is present in the district, committed to working with us on various levels, helping us to find solutions to the conditions that she described in her study. She believes the district is committed to improving education here, and that we have made a priority of addressing those conditions that prevent learning.

We believe that the extreme examples of disrespect and profanity described in Anyon's study no longer exist in Newark. Through improved teacher recruitment practices, capacity- building professional development, and close collaboration with all sectors that influence the educational process, the reconstruction project of Newark is under way. Work has just begun and already expectations are higher and learning is going on in most classrooms.

Some liken the process of reform in Newark to changing the wheels of a moving train—repairs must be made while objects continue in motion. This scenario, logic would indicate, is an impossibility. A preferable analogy is one made to the process of in-flight refueling: bodies remain in motion, yet the needed conditions for continuing the journey are met. In much the same way, Newark cannot come to a complete stop and so we must devise creative solutions to make needed adjustments and changes as we continue on our journey to educate the students of this city to high standards.

II

Audacious Goal or Deja Vu?

Karen S. Gallagher

Pick up almost any recent article about reform efforts in education and you will read that our workplaces, our economy, our way of thinking about what we are have changed dramatically—yet schools have not changed. Even more pressing is the recognition that the teaching profession itself has suffered from decades of neglect. While technology has revolutionized the way we communicate with one another and the way we organize our work, elementary and secondary schools and teacher preparation programs, by and large, have been stagnant, continuing to reflect few of the reforms found in other professions. But if the ways teachers are prepared for their work have not changed significantly, it has not been for lack of recommendations.

Since the 1930s, many books, blue ribbon commission reports, and scientific studies have offered numerous solutions to allegedly defective teacher training. A certain redundancy exists among these recommendations. As Keith (1987) noted, there are only so many elements of a teacher preparation program that can be manipulated: the structure including length of program; the content of the training including the mix of liberal arts, general education and pedagogy courses; the efforts at recruitment of teacher candidates; the admission standards for the teacher candidates; and the tests administered to graduates before they achieve licensure. The latest entrant into this literature is *What Matters Most: Teaching for America's Future*, a report of the National Commission on Teaching & America's Future (1996). This 26-member panel was funded by the Rockefeller Foundation and the Carnegie Corporation of New York to "provide an action agenda for meeting America's educational challenges." The agenda, set forth in September of 1996, proposes "an audacious goal for America's future . . . access to competent, caring, qualified teaching in schools organized for success" p. vi).

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In my role as dean of a research university-based school of education, I have been challenged by many to explain how this report is any different from previous reform documents as well as to defend the expenditure of resources on such an undervalued endeavor as preservice education. The purpose of this essay is to respond to these challenges. This essay will address three questions. First, what does *What Matters Most* want schools, colleges, and departments of education to do? Second, do schools, colleges, and departments of education have the capacity to respond to the National Commission's action agenda? Third, given the seven decades of public criticism and responding reform reports, why should we believe that this set of recommendations has any more chance of changing the way we prepare teachers than the myriad of previous reports? Answers to these questions are complex and this chapter will not attempt to thoroughly explore all possibilities. My purpose is to try to set *What Matters Most* apart from other reform documents and to dispel some of the cynicism prevalent in teacher education circles.

Policy Recommendations

What Matters Most is organized into five sets of policy recommendations. Within each set are between three and five specific recommendations that need to be taken together to gain the sense of what the general policy recommends. Although the report is specifically focused on teacher preparation, its authors clearly recognize the four constituent forces shaping the development of teaching as a profession. The National Commission members seem to have understood that in order to change the profession of teaching it will be necessary to change *all* elements of the profession simultaneously. That is, the practices of preparation programs at the collegiate level, of professional organizations, of state licensing agencies, and of individual practitioners themselves must change. Approximately 1,200 schools, colleges and departments of education (SCDEs) in this country cannot make the dramatic changes called for either in isolation from or without the explicit cooperation of the other three elements of the teaching profession.

Before addressing the capacity issue, I will describe what specifically is being asked of SCDEs and how these recommendations are interrelated to changes in schools and the profession. The five sets of policy recommendations include standards for students, expectations for teachers, the structure and organization of schools and teacher education programs, and professional development standards. Although treated separately for the sake of discussion, the implementation of these recommendations as a whole is necessary.

I. Get Serious about Standards for Both Students and Teachers

One barrier to improvement of teacher preparation has been the low and/or unenforced standards for teacher performance. As research has demonstrated and as the National Commission states, what teachers know and can do is the most important influence on what students learn. If we expect students to demonstrate achievement of world-class standards in such areas as mathematics and science, then teachers must teach in new ways and schools must support these efforts. Standards are criteria set up and established by authority as a rule to measure quality, extent, quantity, and value (*Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 1995). In this first set of recommendations, *What Matters Most* recommends five interwoven policies that are based on acceptance and enforcement of standards for teachers and teacher educators. At the heart of this set of policies is the acceptance of the authority to set the specific standards *for* teachers *by* teachers.

Teacher educators in colleges and universities have long lived with the reality of dual authority over their programs. This stems from the nature of professional education within the university; that is, graduates receive a baccalaureate degree with requirements established by the college or university and they receive a license to practice with rules established by a state agency. The major difference between SCDEs and other campus-based professional schools or colleges is that the state agency responsible for granting access to practice is not controlled by the profession. For example, engineers and architects are state licensed, by boards made up predominantly of engineers and architects. For teachers in 75 percent of the states, their licensure authority is controlled by an elected or appointed state board of education. The National Commission recommendation calls for a shift in authority to the profession through the establishment in every state of autonomous professional teaching standard boards. Such boards will develop and enforce ethical codes as well as technical standards of practice. Only 12 states have autonomous professional boards and half of these were created within the last six years. This calls for a radical shift of authority away from two traditional sources of decision making. State boards of education, whether appointed or elected, would no longer determine the standards for licensing or for approval of teacher education programs. State legislatures would no longer be able to determine what to include in teacher licensure regulations.

As in other professions, the establishment of autonomous state professional teaching standards boards would create a network with common standards, assessments based on the standards, and reciprocity agreements. The current state barriers to movement of teachers would most likely be minimized. Other National Commission-proposed standards in this section include linking licensure to standards through performance assessments;

using the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) as the benchmarks of accomplished teaching; and mandating National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) accreditation for all schools of education. The consequence of toughening standards must be enforcement with teeth. The report asserts that allowing weak teacher education programs to continue must cease or standards are meaningless.

II. Reinvent Teacher Preparation and Professional Development

Building on the obvious need for standards as the basis for both student and teacher performance, the National Commission recommends that both colleges and public schools work with states to redesign teacher education so that the huge turnover in the teaching force predicted in the next decade will not be met with the typical, short-term band-aids and emergency efforts. All new teachers will need to be adequately prepared and all teachers must have access to continuous high-quality learning opportunities. Teacher education programs must be organized around such standards as stronger disciplinary understandings, greater focus on learning and development, more knowledge of curriculum and assessment design, greater understanding of both special needs and ethnically and racially diverse students, and technological skills to support student learning. These program standards will be difficult to attain no matter what, but in an era of high teacher turnover, the pressure to cut back on standards for the sake of getting a person in the classroom is enormous.

The National Commission makes a specific recommendation for the structure of teacher programs: extended, graduate-level programs with year-long internships in professional development schools. The rationale behind this specific recommendation is based on studies done of graduates from extended programs, programs such as those found in the Holmes Partnership and the National Network for Educational Renewal, and the notion that getting serious about content discipline standards for teachers means their mastering a discipline at the *undergraduate* level.

Like the policies recommended in the previous section, these recommendations propose a shift in decision-making authority, away from teacher education faculties to an alliance of SCDEs, schools, state agencies and policy makers, and current teachers and administrators. Charter schools of education are suggested as one possible course of action to achieve this recommendation. Charter colleges or schools of education would be free from current state regulations to demonstrate best practice in all aspects of their work, much as charter schools at the elementary and secondary levels are viewed as a means to effecting reforms.

III. Fix Teacher Recruitment and Put Qualified Teachers in Every Classroom

Although this third set of recommendations addresses policies that require state and school district actions, embedded within them are measures that SCDEs can pursue. Districts and universities could enter into arrangements where preservice teachers could easily transition into classroom positions through early hiring practices during their internships. Scholarships and forgiveness loans targeted at shortages in certain subject areas and geographic locations are examples of aggressive recruitment techniques that result in high quality teachers getting into more classrooms.

IV. Encourage and Reward Teacher Knowledge and Skills

The three policy recommendations in this section of the report focus on creating a career continuum for teaching in school districts that is based on the concept of teaching as a profession. Compensation for career progression across this continuum should be based on rewarding teachers for deep knowledge of subjects, additional knowledge in meeting the special kinds of student and school needs, and high levels of performance measured against professional teaching standards. The role of the teacher education program in this continuum is twofold: without the delivery of foundational knowledge in subject matter, general education, and pedagogy in the preservice program, there is no basis for development. Second, the career continuum embodies lifelong learning and advanced study in colleges and universities as well as in the classrooms and the professional development activities found in districts, schools and professional organizations. The important relationship between professional standards and assessments is fundamental for making this career continuum effective. And SCDEs contribute to the efficacy of career progression by basing their preservice curriculum on the same standards as the accomplished teacher is judged by the NBPTS. The difference between these two ends of the continuum is the level of proficiency.

V. Create Schools that Are Genuine Learning Organizations

Although the recommendations in this set of policies are focused on public schools, the intent of flattening hierarchies of authorities and preparing principals who understand teaching and learning is crucial to SCDEs. The report recommends that principals of the future come from the ranks of National Board-certified teachers and continue with licensing standards like those recently developed for schools leaders by a consortium of states under the auspices of the Council for Chief State School Officers. Preparation in professionally accredited institutions will also ensure that principals' training reflects the demands of student standards. In a 2-year graduate program tied

to the authentic activities of educational leadership, school principal candidates would maintain a school-based position while taking ongoing course work that develops analytical, political, and research skills along with knowledge of curriculum, teaching, assessment, staff development, and policy. Like teachers, principals should take a year-long internship during which they assemble a portfolio of evidence about their work as leaders and facilitators of learning and teaching.

As with teachers, initial preparation for the principalship is just the beginning of lifelong learning. In fact, research has shown that principals are often more isolated than teachers and in need of more collegial support than they generally have available. If schools are to be organized for student success in learning, there will need to be more investment in principal learning starting in the preparation programs. Collaboration with teacher education and public schools is one method of linking principals with the teaching and learning process.

Capacity to Change

The five sets of policy recommendations are neither new nor necessarily unacceptable, particularly as they relate to schools, colleges, and departments of teacher education. Like the previous reform reports issued during the last sixty years, they call for SCDEs to make structural changes, curricular changes, stronger links between standards and assessments, and authentic partnerships among the components of the profession. *What Matters Most* acknowledges that making recommendations is the easy part of reform. Success in implementing school reforms has been the bane of previous reform agendas.

In light of the National Commission's interrelated policy recommendations, some attention to the capacity of teacher preparation programs, especially those embedded in research universities, is needed. Local capacity has long been recognized as the key to implementation of classroom and school reforms (Berman & McLaughlin, 1997; Elmore & McLaughlin, 1988; McLaughlin, 1987). Few substantive studies have been done to understand SCDEs and their capacity to effect immense changes in how they do business. The complexity of the recommendations from *What Matters Most* is greater than previous reports, so local capacity, as it relates to teacher education programs, is of relevance to the potential effectiveness of the report. If, as researchers have found in studies conducted with public schools engaged in instructional reform, local capacity is necessary to support teachers' capacity to teach in new ways (Jennings & Spillane, 1996; Spillane & Thompson, 1997; Spillane, Thompson, Lubienski, Jita & Reimann, 1995), then the local capacity of SCDEs is critical to systemic change, let alone for these reforms to result in meaningful improvement in teacher preparation.

School Districts Studied

Spillane and Thompson (1997) define a local education agency's (LEA) capacity to support ambitious instructional reform in the classroom as the LEA leaders' ability to learn new ideas from external policy and professional sources and to help others within the district learn these ideas. In a study of nine Michigan school districts, the researchers concentrated on those district administrators and lead teachers who were actively involved in developing and implementing LEA policies about mathematics and science education. This study is salient to SCDEs as they plan how to address the policies recommended by the National Commission.

Briefly, Spillane and Thompson (1997) found uneven progress in the implementation of mathematics and science standards. Similar to earlier studies, they found local variability was the rule in the districts' learning of key ideas. All nine LEAs in the study were revising their policies to support instructional ideas more consistent with state and national standards. For example, the districts were working to ensure that the topics covered in their K-12 curricula matched the state's mathematics and science standards. These *topical* alignment initiatives, however, offered a somewhat inflated index of the extent to which LEAs' reforms approximated national and state reform ideas. Moving beyond topical alignment to consider whether core ideas from the state standards and such national standards as American Association for the Advancement of Science and National Council of Teachers of Mathematics were reflected in LEA reforms, Spillane and Thompson found that LEA reforms were not as well aligned substantively.

For example, the reconceptualization of mathematics standards includes the "core idea" of mathematics as problem solving, reasoning, and connections; the reconceptualization of science shifts the emphasis from factual details and memorization to greater attention to connections across the disciplines. The key point made by the researchers is that these core ideas constitute a thorough reconceptualization of the content and pedagogy of science and mathematics as school subjects and these ideas are intended to make the learning of these subjects in schools more like doing science and mathematics in real-world settings. What the researchers found in the districts under study was a rather superficial *topical* alignment with national and state reform documents rather than the deeper, transformative *substantive* realignment intended by reformers. Without substantive realignment, most students will be unable to achieve at newer and higher levels than before and the goal of reaching world-class standards will not be met

Rethinking Local Capacity

In light of the extraordinary demands put on teachers (and students)

to increase the levels of learning in such areas as mathematics and science, the local capacity of school districts and individual schools as well as of SCDEs and professional development programs must be reconsidered. The LEA's and the school of education's capacity to support ambitious instructional reform really means thinking of local capacity primarily as a capacity to learn the *substantive* ideas at the heart of new reforms and to help teachers, whether they be in K-12 schools or institutions of higher education, learn these ideas. Such capacity, Spillane and Thompson found, consists of human capital (knowledge, skills, and dispositions of leaders within a district), social capital (social links within and outside the district, together with the norms and trust to support open communication via these links), and financial resources (allocations of time, materials, and staffing). Local capacity moves beyond its past conceptualization as based on the sum of individual skills and knowledge.

In this view, learning is the process through which human capital is developed and learning depends on the development of social capital. Some threshold value of financial resources is necessary as well, but the value of financial resources in the capacity-building process is heavily conditioned by the levels of human and social capital in the district.

Whether leaders can teach the new ideas to their colleagues depends partly on whether they can generalize and interpret the new conceptions of instruction for K-12 students so that they become useful in teaching other teachers. But it also depends on whether these other teachers trust them and their teacher colleagues enough to communicate openly with them on a sustained basis and on whether patterns of such collaboration are established in the district. A district where trust and norms for collaboration on matters of professional substance are high is a good learning environment. Funding, staffing, time, and materials are necessary to support all of this, but without LEA leaders with the right commitments, connections to sources of knowledge, and trustworthiness, no amount of money, staff, time, and materials will help.

Implications for SCDEs

There are several implications for schools, colleges, and departments of teacher education based on the growing body of research about capacity to change in general and the Spillane and Thompson research specifically. First, deans, directors, and chairs of SCDEs must have familiarity with the recommendations found in *What Matters Most*. Having the local capacity at the college level to implement meaningful changes in teacher education programs is as complex in institutions of higher education as such change is in schools and districts. If educational administrators in SCDEs do not go beyond the checklist perusal of the report, then a situation similar to

the topical implementation of mathematics and science standards may occur. The National Commission members had access to the robust research base about teaching and learning through their commission staff and staff director, Professor Linda Darling-Hammond. Understanding the substantive nature of teaching and learning for adults who want to teach and directing the conditions of teaching and learning in institutions of higher education assumes knowledge of how preparation can and does make a difference for students in elementary and secondary classrooms.

Furthermore, some kinds of preparation appear to make more difference than others. Standard knowledge of subject matter is important up to a point. For example, out-of-field teachers are less effective than teachers who have been prepared to teach a given subject. However, past the basic subject-area preparation, most studies show that greater preparation in child development, learning theory, curriculum development, and teaching methods has a stronger impact on teacher effectiveness than does additional subject-matter preparation (Darling-Hammond, Wise, & Klein, 1995). In addition, intensive clinical guidance in learning to teach is extremely important to the effectiveness of beginning teachers. This research base suggests a structure for preparation programs that is found in the National Commission recommendations like developing extended teacher preparation programs. Again, the local capacity of individual teacher education programs to respond to the report is related to the understanding of the substance of its recommendations. And besides the formal leadership in SCDEs, faculty leaders must also have the knowledge base.

Another aspect of this need for local leadership of SCDEs to know and understand National Commission recommendations is the need for deans and directors to understand the influence of other players in this arena. Knowing and understanding the standards and recommendations of the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, the Interstate New Teachers Assessment and Support Consortium, and Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium are important components of understanding the direction of *What Matters Most*. In addition, knowing how these various organizations are related to one another and to teacher education is an example of helpful knowledge.

The second implication of local capacity is related to how approximately 1,200 deans, directors, and chairs of SCDEs will learn the substantive issues involved in radical restructuring of their programs; how they will come to have some common understandings of this report; and how likely it is that those whose programs do not measure up to the standards will take up the cause of standards-based teacher education? This last question is particularly relevant to such professional organizations as American Association of

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Colleges for Teacher Education, considering the inability of that organization to adopt National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education accreditation as a precondition to membership.

Other implications for implementation of the National Commission recommendations and local capacity are less well researched, but probably still need to be raised. How many SCDEs have the autonomy within their respective institutions to make changes like becoming extended, 5-year programs? Of course, this particular recommendation is based less on what research shows and more on the membership of the National Commission. Although the debates in teacher education tend to be about the structure of teacher education programs, studies have shown that the content and orientation of programs is more likely to influence teacher learning. Differences in beliefs and knowledge about teaching practice, diverse learners, and subject matter among teacher candidates at the end of preservice programs seem to be largely a function of their entering beliefs and knowledge or of the conceptual orientation of the program (Feiman-Nemser, 1990; Zeichner & Liston, 1990).

Deja Vu All Over Again?

It is clear that *What Matter Most* proposes an audacious goal, although audacity includes an element of originality in its meaning as well as daring and boldness. Most of the individual recommendations are not original to this report. For example, the need for liberal arts education, in-depth study in at least one field, preparation in professional education, and extended periods of clinical practice has been recommended by many reports (Sarason, 1962; Woodring, 1975). So too the need for standardized testing of teaching and subject-matter competence prior to certification has been recognized as important (American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, 1974; Carnegie Forum, 1986; Holmes Group, 1986). The boldness comes into this new report when it is understood as a whole-change document. None of the individual recommendations can be effected alone. The daring nature of this report is its grounding in the knowledge that change is a journey, not a blueprint and that both top-down and bottom-up strategies are necessary for change to occur (Fullan, 1992). In addition, schools, colleges, and departments of education are but one of the four constituent groups that influences the development of teaching into a profession. The report is consistent throughout its text when it states that teacher educators, teachers, policy makers, professional organizations, and parents must be involved in the implementation of the recommendations.

It is not possible to answer for all SCDEs whether they have the capacity to implement these recommendations. Clearly, the members of the National Commission believe that some SCDEs will close and will close

because they will have been found wanting when compared to national standards. While the definition of "local capacity" used in this essay assumes that local capacity is present if formal and informal educational leaders have the knowledge of what is expected of them as well as the skills to teach this knowledge to key individuals in the classrooms, we also know that no amount of knowledge will ever make it totally clear what action should be taken. Many SCDEs have and will have responded affirmatively to the National Commission's recommendations. The 12-state partnership formed last fall with those states that supported the principles of the report has been completing an inventory of state-level information regarding the specific recommendations of the National Commission. This inventory will help us understand how far we have to go in implementing the full report, but more relevant to the future of the report is the information we will have from a state level to make this report more than a check list of things to do.

The answers to the third question posed at the beginning of this chapter are more difficult. On the one hand, there is much cynicism that "this too shall pass." How is this report any different from the others? Three current conditions exist which make the past not the best predictor of the future of this report. First, higher education is under much scrutiny to respond to its environment and to prove that it is not irrelevant to economic development and global competitiveness. Particularly in public institutions, the calls for greater accountability may make the reform of teacher education a higher priority for some colleges and universities. Certainly as higher education moves to demonstrate its effectiveness in preparing its graduates for tomorrow's jobs, the reform of teacher education programs will probably fit many agenda.

Second, *What Matters Most* may outlive its predecessors because of its timing. The current U.S. president wants to invest in standards-based education reform. The economy appears healthy so that we may have some time to engage in meaningful reforms. The need for huge numbers of new teachers is 7 to 10 years away, thus the time-intense nature of effective change may have the 3 to 5 years or more to progress.

Third, another factor in the report's favor is the existence of many partnerships between SCDEs and schools, as professional development schools, as sites for clinical practice and research, as collaborators in professional development activities for schools. More readily accepted today than in the past is the notion that effective preparation of future teachers requires strong ties to the field.

A final element that was missing in past eras of reform is the sense of urgency that many educational leaders now have. This urgency is based on the persistent attention that innovations like vouchers, charter schools, and for-profit schools have received from state and federal policy makers, from corporations and foundations, from news media. Vouchers have been ruled

unconstitutional in several places that have implemented them; fewer than 700 schools have been created under charter school legislation, and the Edition Project has still failed to make a profit with its 25 schools run for profit. Yet because the public perceives that public schools in general are poorly run and students do not perform as they should, policy makers at the national level seem ready to abandon public education. The overarching difference between what we are doing now to improve schools and students and teacher performance and the reforms of previous decades is that we have identified and agreed upon many standards of performance. Where we have consensus on those standards, we have aligned curriculum and instruction with content standards and assessments and we have seen improved learning.

We know there are no sure-things that work for everyone. *What Matters Most* does offer a plan for improved performance for both students and teachers. It is audacious and hopeful, two characteristics necessary to move ahead.

III

Give and Take: NCTAF and Indiana's Partnership

Marilyn M. Scannell

The past 5 years have been ones of tremendous achievement for the Indiana Professional Standards Board (IPSB). Created in 1992 as an autonomous professional standards board, the IPSB has convinced even its most ardent critics of its sincerity in improving teacher effectiveness for the purpose of increased student learning. Further, the board has served as a convener of many education stakeholder groups in its efforts to improve the teaching profession.

When the IPSB announced Indiana's partnership with the National Commission on Teaching & America's Future, there were mixed reactions. Some feared that the board's success would be marred by adding national reform initiatives. Others noted that the board was already changing so much in the areas of preparation and licensure of education professionals and asked how the beleaguered teacher preparation community could assume any additional tasks. Some were troubled by the prescriptive nature of the National Commission's recommendations, which seemed to mandate only one route to improved practice. Finally, others believed Indiana ought to keep its distance from national initiatives noting education is a state concern.

Given these concerns and criticisms, why then would the IPSB take on yet another reform initiative? The answer lies in the problem of scale in educational innovation. The fact is, as Richard Elmore points out (Elmore, 1996), large-scale reform efforts have in the past been ineffective and transient. Elmore argues that there is:

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> *a deep systemic incapacity of U.S. schools and practitioners who work in them, to develop, incorporate, and extend new ideas about teaching and learning in anything but a small fraction of schools and classrooms. This incapacity, I argue, is rooted primarily in the incentive structures in which teachers and administrators work.* (p. 1)

If Elmore is correct, and his argument is persuasive, then all that the IPSB has accomplished in the past 5 years will have little impact on teaching and learning (and that has been its goal) without undertaking a far more comprehensive endeavor, which is far beyond the Board's purview. The National Commission partnership, then, gives the IPSB the forum to engage 22 education stakeholder groups, ranging from the state Chamber of Commerce to the state legislature, from teachers' organizations to the Congress of Parents and Teachers, in the difficult issues raised by the National Commission surrounding the teacher development continuum

What Does Indiana Bring to the Partnership?

One of the first steps taken by the IPSB to describe its role in the National Commission initiative was to create a chart that depicted the National Commission's recommendations, noted which group of decision makers had purview to act on each recommendation, and indicated the status of each recommendation in Indiana. As can be seen in this chart (see Appendix 1), much has been accomplished in the standards category of the National Commission's recommendations and some in the area pertaining to teacher preparation, induction, and continued professional growth. Using the National Commission's symbol for a quality assurance system for the teacher preparation continuum, it can be said that Indiana has the three-legged stool in place (National Commission, 1996, p. 29).

The construction of Indiana's three-legged stool began in 1992 when the IPSB was created by the state legislature and granted the authority to govern the preparation and licensure of education professionals (teachers, administrators, and school services personnel). The board quickly established it's mission to establish and maintain rigorous, achievable standards for educators beginning with pre-service preparation and continuing throughout their professional careers.

The first step in fulfilling the board's mission was two years of in-depth study of the issues and trends affecting prekindergarten through grade 12 education and the preparation and licensure of education professionals. During this period the board read numerous articles and received testimony from both Indiana and national experts.

The Decision to Move to a Performance-Based Preparation and Licensure System for Education Professionals

After this extensive preparation, in August 1994, the board made the decision to adopt performance-based standards, that is, standards articulating what beginning educators should know and be able to do, as the basis for revising the rules for preparation and licensure of education professionals in Indiana. This decision, they believe, will bring three advantageous results: (1) a clear conception of what education professionals should know and be able to do, based on a common set of standards and a codification of the knowledge base developed by the teaching profession; (2) a teacher preparation continuum that is linked to Indiana's goals for prekindergarten through grade 12 education; and (3) a focus on the student's knowledge and ability to apply that knowledge rather than prescriptive curriculum expectations (Indiana Professional Standards Board, 1995). This performance-based model is consistent with the view that underpins the new paradigm for school reform that starts from the assumption that students are not standardized and that teaching is not routine (Darling-Hammond, 1993).

A Unified System of Quality Assurance: Standards Supporting the Redesign

Moving to a performance-based licensing model does not mean that the complete licensing structure will be dismantled. The new system will encompass the same three phases as the current model (preservice preparation, extended clinical preparation through the Beginning Teacher Internship Program, and continuing professional development). The difference will be how programs to prepare education professionals are designed and how educators are assessed. The focus, which is consistent with Indiana's initiatives for prekindergarten through grade 12 education (P-12), will be on learning outcomes and the actual demonstration of understanding and application rather than on prospective teachers completing a prescribed list of courses and passing a standardized test. Just as the goal for P-12 education is making learning relevant and a lifelong process, so the goal for teacher preparation is to make professional development a career long process.

Key to the reform of teacher preparation and licensure is a unified system of quality assurance throughout the three phases of the career continuum model for education professionals (pre-service preparation, clinical practice and licensure, and continuing professional development). An important foundation for Indiana's new system is the work undertaken by organizations at the national level in setting standards for all phases that are interrelated and consistent. These groups include the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC), and the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS).

All three of these organizations are united in their view that the complex art of teaching requires performance-based standards and assessment strategies that are capable of capturing teachers' reasoned judgments and that evaluate what they can actually do in authentic teaching situations. Taken together the standards developed by these groups embody the kinds of knowledge, dispositions (attitudes and beliefs about teaching), and performances that should be the focus of pre-service preparation, licensure, and continuing professional development for education professionals.

The Standards Development Process

In 1994 the Indiana Professional Standards Board adopted the INTASC model standards (1992) for initial licensing of teachers as the basis for Indiana's new system for preparing and licensing teachers. In doing so the board adopted the standards for knowledge, dispositions, and performances specified for each of the 10 principles developed by INTASC with the understanding that such adoption does not preclude appropriate revision over time to reflect Indiana's needs and beliefs.

At the same time that the board adopted the INTASC standards, it also formed two pilot groups, one for beginning teachers of mathematics encompassing the full spectrum of students' developmental stages from prekindergarten through grade 12, and one for beginning teachers of early adolescent generalist students, or students of ages ranging from 11 to 15. These groups were asked to recommend performance-based standards in their specific content and developmental areas and to recommend a process for the development of performance-based standards in other content and developmental areas. The standards were to be based on the INTASC core model standards.

As the result of these two pilot groups, the IPSB adopted a charge, framework, and generic composition for the remaining advisory groups and adopted the following 10 principles to guide the development of the standards for teacher preparation and licensure:

- *The new standards for preparing and licensing education professionals will be proficiency-driven.* That is, they will describe the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to be possessed by beginning education professionals.

- *The new standards will reflect the continuum of professional development for education professionals.* That is, there will be an interrelatedness among standards for the three phases of professional development: preservice preparation; extended clinical preparation and assessment; and continuing development.

- *The new standards will describe the competencies to be assessed for purposes of granting initial licensure.* Licensure is the responsibility of the state, while certification of education professionals is bestowed by colleagues in recognition of mastery of accomplished practice.

- *The new standards will be linked to Indiana's prekindergarten through grade 12 (P-12) initiatives for students, including curriculum standards and school to work initiatives.* Education professionals cannot be expected to meet P-12 goals and objectives with which they are unfamiliar.

- *The new standards will be developed by educators through advisory group process adopted by the IPSB.*

- *Multiple forms of formative and summative assessments focusing on the desired standards will characterize each phase.*

- *The new system for preparing and licensing education professionals will be simplified.* That is, there will be fewer licensing areas, more integration of specialty areas within licensing areas, and less complicated procedures.

- *Each group of standards will address the need for interdisciplinary education.* That is, education professionals must understand and convey to students the interrelatedness of the various subject areas.

- *The new standards will be based upon students' developmental stages rather than grade levels.*

- *An ongoing evaluation system will be designed and implemented such that the standards and corresponding rules pertaining to each licensing area are reviewed on a regular basis, according to a prearranged schedule.*

All beginning teachers, regardless of the subject they teach or the ages of the children they teach, will be expected to meet the knowledge, dispositions (attitudes and beliefs about teaching), and performances articulated in the INTASC core model standards. Those specializing in the 13 content areas (shown in Appendix 2) will be expected to meet the knowledge, disposition, and performance statements articulated in standards developed for each of these areas. And those teaching children of ages within the four development groups (shown in Appendix 2) will be expected to meet the

knowledge, disposition, and performance statements articulated in standards developed for each of these age groupings.

It is important to understand that the standards developed for each of the content and developmental areas is intended to describe effective practice for education professionals throughout the preparation continuum, that is, the standards will be the same for the beginning educator, the intern, and the experienced educator. What will vary is the level of proficiency expected, becoming more comprehensive or more skillful at each successive stage of the educator's career. The expected proficiency levels should be reflected in the knowledge, disposition, and performance statements accompanying each standard.

Making the Standards a Reality

There are three stages to the IPSB Redesign Process: (1) standards development; (2) assessment development, and (3) licensure development. All stages are interdependent, that is, assessments must be integrally connected to the standards, and licensure must be based on mastery of the standards as demonstrated through multiple forms of assessment, both formative and summative, and including demonstration of classroom performance. Each stage also has two components: a development component and a dissemination, feedback, and editing component.

Advisory groups appointed by the IPSB have been responsible for the development of standards, such as those included in this document. Currently, the standards are undergoing an extensive dissemination process. Comments on the standards by all groups with an interest in the education of Indiana's children are an integral part of this dissemination process. The board's Continuum Linkage Committee has recommended a process recently adopted by the board based on the newly developed standards, for assessing institutions' progress in moving to a performance-based preparation program for educational professionals and for assessing candidates for initial, regular, and ongoing licensure. Finally, the board has appointed a Licensure Committee which began work in summer 1997 for the purpose of developing a licensing framework to reflect the new standards and assessments. When developed, the assessment and licensure recommendations will also undergo an extensive dissemination process.

When the new system is implemented, standards and assessments for preparing and licensing teachers will be purposely linked to each other and to standards for educational achievement of Indiana's students. For this reason, the board believes that Indiana will have better prepared teachers who are more effective in helping all students to achieve at higher levels.

What Does Indiana Gain from the Partnership?

On many occasions during the IPSB's deliberations, board members have discussed issues such as first-year teachers' workloads and teaching assignments, professional development opportunities, and teacher time for planning together and contributing to the improvement of their profession. Although these issues, embedded in the National Commission's recommendations, were not within the board's purview to resolve, they clearly were related to the successful implementation of the board's Redesign of the Governance System for Preparation and Licensure of Education Professionals.

Thus, first and foremost, the National Commission's partnership provides a forum for addressing the prekindergarten through grade 12 structural issues necessary to advance IPSB policy initiatives already underway. This forum begins with Indiana's Advisory Council to the National Commission (see Appendix 3). The Advisory Council has a number of key roles. First, it will advise on the development of a policy inventory, which will serve two purposes: (1) to establish benchmarks for ascertaining whether or not new IPSB initiatives are making a difference in areas such as student retention and graduation from high school and college, licensing actions for education professionals, and approval of professional education units to offer educator preparation programs and (2) to provide data for other areas that are identified by the Advisory Council as priorities for action.

The Advisory Council will also draft an action plan for Indiana that identifies steps to be taken to address areas of concern that have been determined by consensus of the constituencies represented. Finally comes the most difficult role for the Council, that of advocating with the policymaking bodies represented by its members for the agreed-upon action plan.

In addition to providing a forum for discussion and resolution of issues pertaining to "getting to scale" with educational innovations, the National Commission partnership provides important resources to help get the job done. These include:

- a small amount of funding to begin the policy inventory;
- assistance of national researchers to develop the policy inventory and to build the case for Indiana's educational accomplishments and areas of concern;
- networking with other cutting-edge states to learn about their successes and how they were achieved and to problem-solve on areas of mutual need; and

- the support of national constituency groups such as the National Governors' Association, the National Council of State Legislatures, the National Education Association, the American Federation of Teachers, and the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education. These organizations can assist by informing their members about the National Commission's recommendations and advocating for change.

National, State, and Local Roles—Where Is the Balance?

At the beginning of this essay, objections to becoming an National Commission partner state were listed. Thus far this article has addressed why Indiana would enlist in what some perceive to be yet another reform initiative. I am arguing that the National Commission partnership offers Indiana a much-needed strategy for getting to scale with educational innovation pertaining to teacher development and leading to better instruction for all students.

There is, however, one issue that merits additional discussion, and that is the issue of the respective roles of national organizations, state policymakers, and local institutions (higher education institutions, schools, school districts) and their interface. How can the IPSB address the concern about national or state dictates that seem to prescribe only one way of accomplishing educational improvements? My sense of IPSB members' perspectives on this is as follows.

Teaching is a profession and, as such, there are specialized knowledge and skills associated with being a teacher. It is important that the members of the profession agree upon these characteristics in order to design appropriate preparation and make appropriate licensing decisions (a condition of entry to the profession). National organizations play an important role in achieving consensus across the profession about the characteristics of an effective teacher. As noted earlier, the recent articulation of standards among such national organizations as the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium, and the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards has been particularly helpful in efforts to connect standards across the preparation continuum for Indiana's teachers.

The state's role is one of accountability. With its charge to provide a free public education to all citizens, the state has to meet the public interest in ensuring that all teachers are competent. With an increased understanding of the teaching knowledge and skills that impact student learning, teaching competence no longer can depend on minimal expectations, but rather must

be defined as meeting standards; i.e., possession of specific knowledge and skills agreed upon and validated by the profession as related to increased student learning. The state's role is to assure the public that standards have been met prior to issuing a license to practice as an education professional.

The role of local institutions, then, is to design and implement the best programs they can in order to meet or exceed state standards. While the standards have been defined by the profession and accountability measures defined by the state based on those standards, how one meets the standards is a locally determined matter based on a number of factors. Program variations will result depending on the size of the local institution, the diversity of students, and other political, social, and economic factors associated with the region and the institution. There is no one right way to achieve the desired standards!

As a consequence of the relationships described above, Indiana's Advisory Council will likely take issue with some of the National Commission's specific recommendations that appear to prescribe the method/program necessary to meet goals or standards for teacher development. Therefore, Indiana's policy inventory and action plan will target actions and data within the five recommendation areas (Standards, Teacher Preparation and Professional Development, Teacher Recruitment and Hiring, Rewarding Knowledge and Skills, and Creating Schools Organized for Student and Teacher Success) that are of specific interest to Indiana constituencies.

Scaling Up—Can We Get There?

Can the National Commission partnership facilitate Indiana's efforts to change preparation and professional development of education professionals in very fundamental ways? The IPSB's Redesign of the Governance System for Preparation and Licensure of Education Professionals will only be effective in producing better teachers if it affects practice at the grass roots level both in higher education institutions and in schools and is replicated in institution after institution and school after school. The barriers to this goal of systemic change are tremendous. According to Elmore (1996), this country has never achieved the goal of institutionalizing education innovation on a large scale.

Because of the partners involved in the National Commission's work, I believe there is potential for widespread change. Achieving this goal, however, will require unprecedented coordination and consistency among partners at both state and national levels and achieving the support of their members. Perhaps, because of the high stakes involved, the future of public education for America's children, we will achieve a first in America's history—bringing educational innovation to scale.

Appendix 1: Indiana Action Plan for 1997-98

I. Standards

Recommendation (Intent)	Primary Purview of	Comments	Status
• Establish Professional Standards Board	• Legislature	• Created in 1992	Completed
• Secure accreditation for all schools, colleges and departments of education	• Indiana Professional Standards Board (IPSB)	• All use NCATE Standards 32/36 are nationally accredited	Completed
• Close inadequate schools of education (deny ability of schools, colleges and departments of education to recommend for licensure)	• IPSB	• IPSB has authority to deny ability to recommend for licensure	Completed
• License teachers based on performance	• IPSB	• Teacher Classroom Performance Assessments currently being developed	In progress
• Use NBPTS standards as benchmark for accomplished teaching	• IPSB	• Part of Teacher Preparation and Licensure Assessment System adopted by IPSB	In progress

Glossary

IACTE - Indiana Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
IASP - Indiana Association of School Principals
INTASC - Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium
IPSB - Indiana Professional Standards Board
NBPTS - National Board for Professional Teaching Standards
NCATE - National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education
NCTAF - National Commission on Teaching & America's Future
NASDTEC - National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education & Certification
INTASC PADP - Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium Performance Assessment Development Project
PDS - Professional Development Schools
SBE - State Board of Education
SDE - State Department of Education

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II. Reinvent Teacher Preparation and Professional Development

Recommendation (Intent)	Primary Purview of	Comments	Status
• Organize teacher education around standards for students and teachers	• IPSB • State Board of Education (SBE)/State Department of Education (SDE) • Colleges/universities (colleges of education)	• Standards for preparation and licensure under development • Institutional assessment plans to be developed according to framework developed by IACTE Task Force on performance-based licensure	In progress
• Organize professional development around standards for students and teachers	• IPSB • State Board of Education (SBE)/State Department of Education (SDE) • Colleges/universities (colleges of education)	• Performance Based Accreditation does this for professional development	In progress
• Extended, grad-level teacher preparation programs (strengthen and lengthen Beginning Teacher Internship Program)	• IPSB • Colleges/universities (colleges of education)	• A two-year induction period and teacher classroom performance assessments are being developed by the IPSB	In progress
• Mentoring programs for beginning teachers and evaluation of teaching skills	• IPSB	• Beginning Teacher Internship Program established in 1987 • Teacher Classroom Performance Assessments	In progress
• Create stable, high quality sources of professional development	• SBE/SDE • Legislature • School-University partnerships • Teacher Associations • Schools/Corporations	• Some Professional Development Schools and School-University Partnerships have been established • IACTE Task Force report on Continuing Professional Development addresses this	In progress

III. Fix Teacher Recruitment/High Quality Teachers in Every Classroom

Recommendation (Intent)	Primary Purview of	Comments	Status
• Increase ability of low-wealth districts to pay for qualified teachers and insist that districts hire only qualified teachers	• Legislature • SBE/SDE • Parents • IPSB	• Licensing subcommittee to address limited license issue	
• Redesign and streamline district hiring	• School corporations/schools • Teachers Associations (contracts) • IPSB	• New licensing configuration	
• Eliminate barriers to teacher mobility	• IPSB • Legislature (portable pension systems) • Teachers Associations	• NCATE/NASDTEC reciprocity agreements	
• Recruit high-need teachers and provide incentives for shortage areas	• Legislature (scholarships/ financial incentives) • Schools/colleges/school corporations (recruitment programs)	• IACTE Task Force report on Minority Recruitment and Retention/ Alternate Routes to Licensure addresses this	
• Develop high-quality pathways for wide variety of recruits	• IPSB • Colleges/universities (colleges of education) - alternative routes	• Performance-based standards and assessments for preparation and licensure under development • Some alternative preparation programs may exist (but limited) • IACTE Task Force report on Minority Recruitment and Retention/ Alternate Routes to Licensure addresses this	

draft

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IV. Encourage/Reward Knowledge and Skills

Recommendation (Intent)	Primary Purview of	Comments	Status
• Develop career continuum linked to assessments and compensation systems	• IPSB • Teachers Associations/school corporations	• Relicensure standards and assessments under development	
• Remove incompetent teachers	• Teachers Associations • Schools/corporations		
• Incentives for NBPTS certification	• IPSB • Legislature • SBE/SDE (professional development) • Schools/corporations • School-University Partnerships	• Relicensure standards and assessments • Some Professional Development Schools have been established	

draft

V. Create Schools that are Learning Organizations

Recommendation (Intent)	Primary Purview of	Comments	Status
• Restructure time and staff • Rethink schedules	• Legislature • SBE/SDE • Schools/corporations • Teachers Associations		
• Reduce barriers to parent involvement	• Schools/corporations • Business/Industry • Teachers Associations • Colleges/universities		
• Flatten hierarchies and reallocate resources (invest more in teachers and technology)	• School corporations/schools • SBE/SDE • Teachers/administrators • Teachers Associations • Legislature		
• Venture capital to schools for teacher learning linked to school improvement	• Legislature • SBE/SDE	• Educate Indiana • Indiana Academic Improvement Program	
• Select and prepare principals who understand teaching and learning and can lead to high performance schools	• IASP • IPSB • Colleges/universities • School corporations • SBB/SDE	• New preparation and licensure standards drafted • Need to align programs with new standards • Principals Leadership Academy	

Appendix 2

Concept Overview

CONCEPT OVERVIEW

--- Standards Inter-relationship ---

The orbit behaviors of the bodies of a solar system can be used to understand the inter-relationship of the 3 levels of standards. The INTASC core standards will act as the hub of all standards (as does a sun in a solar system.) Orbiting around INTASC will be Developmental and Content standards (Independent, but mutually interdependent).

Developmental Standards

Early Childhood	*ages 3-8*
Middle Childhood	*ages 7-12*
*Early Adolescence **	*ages 11-15*
Adolescence /Young Adulthood	*ages 14-18*

Content Standards

Mathematics *
English / Language Arts
Fine Arts
Physical Education & Health
Science
Social Studies / History
Foreign Languages
Library / Media
Vocational Education
School Services
Exceptional Needs
English as a New Language
Building Level Administrators

** These standards were developed in Pilot Advisory Groups.*

View Glossary

INTASC Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium is a program of the Council of Chief State School Officers, established in 1987 to enhance collaboration among states interested in rethinking teacher assessment for initial licensing as well as for preparation and induction into the education profession.

INTASC Core Model Standards: These standards are model standards developed by INTASC for beginning teacher licensing and development.

Appendix 3

Advisory Council

Indiana New Professional Teachers Project/National Commision on Teaching & America's Future Advisory Council

Betty Ayers
Association of Teacher Educators

Victoria Soto Candelaria
Indiana Federation of Teachers

William Christopher
Student Assistance Commission

Marilyn Haring
Indiana Professional Standards Board

Gail Huffman-Joley*
National Board for Professional Teaching Standards

Joyce Johnstone*
Marian College

Stan Jones
Indiana Commission for Higher Education

Sheila Klinker
Indiana General Assembly

Lynn Lehman*
Noblesville Community Schools

Teresa S. Lubbers
Indiana General Assembly

Elaine Lucas
Ameritech

Darlene Maloney
Indiana Congress of Parents & Teachers

Jose Mejia*
School City of East Chicago

Philip Metcalf
Indiana Professional Standards Board

Nelson Miller
Indiana School Boards Association

John Moore
University/College President

Anne Moudy*
Marion Community Schools

Peggy O'Malley
Indiana Department of Workforce Development

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Pat O'Rourke
Northwest Indiana Forum

T.K. Olson
Independent Colleges of Indiana

June Owen*
Merrillville Community Schools

Derek Redelman
Indiana Chamber of Commerce

Suellen Reed
Indiana Department of Education

Paul Robertson
Indiana General Assembly

Alba Rosenman*
Ball State University

Rex Roth
Indiana Association of Public School Superintendents

Kathy Smith
Governor's Office

Glenn Tebbe
Indiana Non-Public Education Association

Edward Wall
Indiana Association of School Principals

Phil Warner
Indiana General Assembly

Tom Weatherwax
Indiana General Assembly

Lynne Weisenbach
Indiana Association of Colleges for Teacher Education

David Young
Indiana State Teachers Association

*Coordinating Team member

IV

Professional Development at the Center of School Reform

Dennis Sparks

> *Standards for students and teachers are the key to reforming American education. Access to competent teachers must become a new student right. Access to high-quality preparation, induction, and professional development must become a new teacher right.* (National Commission, 1996, p. iii)

With these premises, *What Matters Most: Teaching for America's Future*, from the National Commission on Teaching & America's Future, provides a strong rationale for the central role of professional development in school reform and a powerful stimulus for a new kind of professional development for all of America's teachers.

In recognizing that what teachers know and can do is the most important influence on what students learn, *What Matters Most* acknowledges that high-quality professional development is an essential condition in a system in which high expectations are held for students and teachers. "After a decade of reform," *What Matters Most* argues, "we have finally learned in hindsight what should have been clear from the start: Most schools and teachers cannot produce the kind of learning demanded by the new reforms —not because they do not want to, but because they do not know how, and the systems in which they work do not support them in doing so. . . . On the whole, the school reform movement has ignored the obvious: What teachers know and can do makes the crucial difference in what children learn" (National Commission, 1996, p. 5).

Dennis Sparks is executive director of the 8,000-member National Staff Development Council, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Of the National Commission's six "turning points" to be achieved by the year 2006, five are significant for professional development:

- All children will be taught by teachers who have the knowledge, skills, and commitments to teach children well.
- All teachers will have access to high-quality professional development and regular time for collegial work and planning.
- Both teachers and principals will be hired and retained based on the ability to meet professional standards of practice.
- Teachers' salaries will be based on their knowledge and skill.
- Quality teaching will be the central investment of schools (p. 63).

The recommendations provided by the National Commission are bold and provocative. They are consistent with the National Staff Development Council's advocacy for professional development that is results driven, standards based, and job embedded (Sparks, 1994). *What Matters Most* addresses the issues of concern to most K-12 educators who are committed to professional development as a central feature of school reform: time for adult learning and the financial resources to support it, incentives for professional development, models for the improved practice of professional development, and the creation of the conditions around classrooms that foster success. Most importantly, the report uses standards for student and teacher performance to provide a powerful justification for professional development, recognizing that professional development is a means to an end, not an end in itself. Given its many strengths, the report nonetheless contains an important omission and faces noteworthy challenges in the implementation of its important recommendations.

Recommendations

Of the five recommendations contained in *What Matters Most*, four are particularly significant for the professional development of teachers and other school personnel:

- Get serious about standards, for both students and teachers.
- Reinvent teacher preparation and professional development.
- Encourage and reward teacher knowledge and skill.

- Create schools that are organized for student and teacher success (p. 64).

Let's consider the professional development implications of each.

Get Serious about Standards for Both Students and Teachers

"We need to define curriculum goals for students so teachers can organize their efforts more coherently across the grades and subject areas," Linda Darling-Hammond (1997) said at the Washington, D.C., press conference that unveiled the National Commission's report. "Then, we need to use these as the basis for teaching standards that guide teacher education, licensing examinations, and ongoing professional development" (p. 40).

What Matters Most recommends that the standards developed by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) be used as the cornerstone for teacher development and evaluation. "Standards are valuable not only in the context of formal certification systems," the report notes. "They can inform professional development efforts ranging from graduate school courses to local seminars and videotape groups that allow teachers to see the standards in action and reflect on their own practice" (National Commission, 1996, p. 74).

Why has the National Commission placed such great faith in the NBPTS standards? "I am a member of the Board," Darling-Hammond says, "but when it was first created I was a skeptic. Since then I have had a chance to see the standards and the assessment processes up close and to talk to a lot of teachers who have been part of the process. The standards articulate and they embody in assessments what good teachers really believe good teaching is about" (Sparks, 1997, p. 35). Darling-Hammond goes on in the same interview to point out that the standards recognize the complexity of teaching and make very prominent the relationship between teaching and student learning.

In addition, the NBPTS certification process, while not necessarily encompassing all the professional development experiences teachers should experience, does provide a firm foundation, according to Darling-Hammond. "The standards that undergird the National Board assessment are broad," she says, "and should inform other professional development experiences such as peer coaching and ongoing discussions about classroom practice. The standards offer a lens for looking at practice that can be more widely applied than just the event of a teacher sitting for Board certification. The standards can help establish a set of norms and beliefs about practice that can permeate all professional development" (Sparks, 1997, p. 35).

Standards for students and teachers provide a context for productive professional development. Because professional development is a tool that helps a school system accomplish its goals for student learning, standards that describe what students and teachers should know and be able to do provide a compelling purpose for teacher learning. Standards gives teachers and administrators a benchmark against which they can compare the results of their current efforts, establish goals for improvement, and determine the knowledge and skills they must acquire to close the gap between current reality and the future in which all students and staff members learn and perform at high levels.

Reinvent Teacher Preparation and Professional Development

What Matters Most laments the unproductive practices used in professional development in U.S. schools and the low level of expenditures on these activities. The report cites the benefits of teacher networks and school-university partnerships (such as professional development schools) that provide long-term connections among teachers within and across schools to address persistent problems of practice. It also cites the need for mentoring programs for beginning teachers and the importance of making ongoing professional development part of teachers' daily work.

"Teachers need real professional development opportunities to keep up with new technologies and to teach in the demanding ways we now expect," Darling-Hammond (1997) says. "These opportunities should include teacher academies, networks, and chances to work intensively with one another. We urge that teachers have at least 10 hours a week to work and plan with one another and 10 days per year of intensive professional development" (p. 40). This time, Darling-Hammond (Sparks, 1997) says, would be used "to share knowledge, to build practice, to critique ideas, to polish lessons, to build curriculum, to create assessments, to score student work, and so on. The most powerful learning for the improvement of already skilled teachers is the fine tuning of practice that can only occur in collegial settings" (p. 34).

To buttress this recommendation, *What Matters Most* describes how many European and Asian countries do a better job of preparing and supporting teachers. These teachers, according to the report, receive more extensive training in content and pedagogy than do their U.S. counterparts and have more regularly scheduled time available for ongoing learning and work with their colleagues.

For instance, the report notes that teachers in Germany, Japan, and China spend 15 to 20 hours per week working with colleagues on developing curriculum, counseling students, and pursuing their own learning. This time is made possible in Europe and Asia, the report says, because classroom teachers there make up 60 to 80 percent of public education employees, in contrast with about 43 percent in the United States.

"We found that in other industrialized countries which we think of as peers or competitors (France, Belgium, Germany, Japan, and many others whose students achieve at higher levels than our own), teachers comprise 70 to 80 percent of education employees as compared to only 43 percent in the United States," Darling-Hammond notes. "In the U.S., we have invested in a large regulatory apparatus for managing schools rather than in teachers themselves" (Darling-Hammond, 1997, p. 38).

Increasing the proportion of education personnel in this country who have teaching responsibilities would mean that curriculum specialists, special educators, and counselors, among others, would assume some classroom responsibilities as part of instructional teams, *What Matters Most* says. Teachers, then, would not only teach youngsters but would have more time each day for ongoing professional development through processes such as joint planning of lessons, research, curriculum and assessment work, study groups, and peer coaching.

Other lessons can be learned from these European and Asian countries, the report says. One lesson concerns the value of extensive mentoring in the first year of teaching. Another lesson concerns the provision of time for collaborative work. In some of these countries, teachers have 15 to 20 hours a week throughout their careers to work together on refining lessons, improving curriculum, solving school problems, and learning from one another.

To address the problem of inadequate funding for professional development, the National Commission recommends that at least 1 percent of state and local education funding be consistently devoted to high-quality professional development and that states give matching grants to districts that allocate up to 3 percent of their funds to professional development.

Encourage and Reward Teacher Knowledge and Skill

What Matters Most addresses the critical issue of the link between the teacher reward system (which typically is based on years of experience and graduate degrees earned) and professional learning and practice. "The compensation system does not reward excellence in teaching," Darling-Hammond says. "Teachers' salaries are based on experience and, to some extent, on education credits, but not on their knowledge, skills, and performance. Although most teachers work hard to try to learn on their own, the system does not reward them for these efforts or provide others with incentives for greater achievement" (Darling-Hammond, 1997, p. 39).

"Most professional dollars," *What Matters Most* says, "are spent today either reimbursing teachers for courses that may not be directly related to school needs or their classroom responsibilities for district-determined workshops with even less connections to teachers' own practice. As traditionally organized, inservice education usually conducted as mass-produced hit-

and-run workshops is not well suited to helping teachers with the most pressing challenges they face in deepening their subject matter knowledge, responding to student diversity, or teaching more effectively" (National Commission, 1996, p. 83).

Instead, the report recommends that a portion of that compensation be redirected to recognize teachers' knowledge and skill, and that the NBPTS standards discussed above be used as the basis for that recognition. To promote action toward that end, the report suggests that states and school districts offer incentives so that by the year 2006 a NBPTS-certified teacher will be present in each of the 105,000 schools in the United States.

Create Schools that Are Organized for Student and Teacher Success

What Matters Most argues that schools must become genuine learning organizations for both students and teachers. To that end the report recommends that scheduling and staffing patterns be altered so that teachers have regular time to work together, that venture capital in the form of "challenge grants" be provided to schools for teacher learning linked to school improvement, and that principals be prepared, selected, and retained based on their understanding of teaching and learning and their ability to lead high-performing schools.

"We need to create schools that are organized for student and teacher success," Darling-Hammond says, "by investing more in the front lines of schools allocating more personnel and resources directly to classroom teaching as many restructured schools are now doing, organizing teachers in teams responsible for shared groups of students over longer periods of time, rewarding the efforts of successful teams and schools, and preparing principals who understand how to create and lead these high-performance schools" (Darling-Hammond, 1977, p. 41).

Current school structures do not support teaching, Darling Hammond argues. "Teaching loads are unrealistic," she says. "U.S. teachers teach more hours per week and year than teachers in any other country. Most have only 3 to 5 hours per week to spend preparing for class usually on their own, rather than in collaboration with other teachers. Relatively few districts support serious, sustained professional development that addresses real problems of practice. Occasional hit-and-run workshops hardly do the job of helping teachers learn to address challenging new subject matter standards and the diverse needs of today's students" (Darling-Hammond, 1997, p. 39).

An Omission

While *What Matters Most* stresses the importance of standards for student learning and for teaching, there is, however, another essential set of standards that are not mentioned in the report standards for professional

development. Such standards provide a benchmark for accomplished practice that can guide the professional development and school improvement process. *The National Staff Development Council's Standards for Staff Development* (1994a, b, c) stipulate the critical ingredients of professional development efforts that are intended to produce high levels of learning for all students. These standards, presented in a study guide format for school use, describe the context (organizational support), process (how the learning occurs), and content (what is learned) for effective staff development efforts. In addition to the National Staff Development Council's standards, a number of states and school systems have created their own standards to guide grant making, planning, and program implementation efforts.

Challenges

Recommendations as bold and provocative as these present numerous challenges in their implementation. The core functions of teaching and learning they address are notoriously impervious to outside interventions. While a strength of the report is its wide ranging recommendations based on a recognition of the interconnection of various parts of the educational system, its comprehensiveness will be off-putting to those who hope for simple solutions. Herein lies both the challenges and the strengths of the report. Some of the most significant of these challenges are:

- *A low level of awareness on the part of many district and state professional development leaders regarding the report's existence, yet alone its recommendations.* The implementation of the report's recommendations requires the same type of sustained study and "meaning-making" experiences on the part of educational leaders that the report recommends as professional development experiences for teachers.

- *A view in many places that professional development is an end in itself, an obligation to be discharged, rather than a means to achieve high levels of learning for all students.* In far too many school systems and states, for instance, attendance at professional development activities is still monitored and rewarded by seat-time requirements such as continuing education units or professional development points. Professional development too often provides the last vestiges of a seat-time view of learning in an educational system that is increasingly committed to the demonstration of knowledge and skills on the part of its students.

- *Deeply entrenched norms that govern professional development and related school improvement activities.* The vast majority of professional development, for example, is still viewed as a "sit and get" experience in which relatively passive teachers listen to experts tell them what to do. In these settings, professional development is seldom seen as intellectually rigorous, sustained study leading to deep changes that produce high levels of learning for all students.

- *The lack of widely disseminated examples of what new forms of professional development look like in schools, particularly those forms of learning that affect the underlying beliefs of teachers about teaching and learning.* In many communities it is still difficult to find even one school whose entire faculty is committed to sustained study with the goal of having all students achieve high levels of performance; even fewer examples exist of schools that have been successful in actually realizing those improvements in learning.

- *The connection between professional development and other key aspects of the school system (e.g., contractual agreements, incentive systems).* Because professional development is deeply embedded in the broader educational system of which it is a part, progress is dependent on the complex task of simultaneously changing leadership practices, contractual language, and the design of the teachers' workday, among other state and local factors. *What Matters Most* wisely acknowledges this interdependency in the breadth of its recommendations.

Taken together, these challenges require a deep shift in the fundamental assumptions held by many educators about the conditions that are necessary to promote and sustain improvement. Addressing and altering these assumptions is no less daunting than the task of addressing and altering teachers' conceptualizations of teaching and learning. In both instances, a transformation is required that extends beneath daily practice to some of the deepest, most closely held beliefs about human learning, teaching, and leadership.

Conclusion

Given these challenges, can the National Commission's goals be achieved by 2006? "We believe they can," Darling-Hammond says, "if all of the actors in the system teachers, parents, principals, superintendents, schools boards, university faculty, legislators, and governors focus their attention on what matters most supporting good teaching for every child in every community as the key to America's future" (Sparks, 1997, p. 36).

Darling-Hammond (1997) believes that the cost of implementing these recommendations is within reach. "The cost of no action continued mediocrity, declining support for schools, low student performance, an inability to compete in the ever more competitive labor market is much higher," she says. "We believe we must make the commitment to provide a caring and competent teacher for every classroom and every student to secure America's future" (p. 41).

Giving Darling-Hammond's optimism its due, recommendations as far-reaching as those contained in *What Matters Most* will not be readily implemented in most school systems given the challenges described above. Implementation will require extended study and dialogue as educators, parents, and community members work through the report's meaning and implications. But if we truly believe that every child has a right to a competent teacher and every teacher a right to the preparation and support that leads to that competence, the recommendations of this report cannot be ignored.

Not only does *What Matters Most* make provocative and useful recommendations, it is also a source of hope. "For every one of these problems, there are states and school districts that have created alternatives that provide teachers with the knowledge and the conditions they need to succeed," Darling-Hammond concludes. "They have demonstrated that these changes make a difference in student achievement. This report builds on these accomplishments in making its recommendations" (Darling-Hammond, 1997, p. 40).

Afterword: Building Capacity for *What Matters Most*

Linda Darling-Hammond

The papers in this volume by Beverly Hall, Karen Gallagher, Marilyn Scannell, and Dennis Sparks reflect the efforts and concerns of educators in schools, districts, colleges of education, and professional associations across the country. All of these authors, who are leaders in different parts of the educational enterprise, are grappling with issues of organizational capacity, the coordination of a hydra-like set of actors influencing schools, and the transformation of norms and practices born of imperatives that are many decades old.

No part of the education system has been immune from the incessant drumbeat for change over the last two decades. Because of economic upheavals and growing social complexity, schools are being asked to educate a much more diverse group of students to much higher standards than ever before. The adaptive, complex teaching required for this task cannot be produced through regulated curriculum or teacher-proof materials. To accomplish this goal, teachers must deeply understand learning, development, and pedagogy, as well as subject matter, curriculum, and assessment. In addition, schools must be organized to support in-depth learning for both students and teachers, and must be structured to address diversity rather than to implement standardized procedures. This is an extremely tall order, given the current lack of a solid infrastructure for systematic preservice and career-long teacher learning, as well as the geological dig of policies and the intransigence of bureaucracies that hold current practices in place.

What Matters Most sought to identify both the priorities for comprehensive change that might enable educators to achieve education's new mission and the barriers that would have to be overcome in order to succeed. The report's release in 1996 and the National Commission's subsequent work

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have gotten the attention of a significant portion of the policymaking and practitioner communities. The report has stimulated dozens of pieces of federal and state legislation; there are currently at least five major bills in Congress to upgrade teacher education and recruitment. Strong media interest has produced more than 2,000 news articles and editorials nationally and abroad. School districts, colleges of education, and professional associations have launched a series of major initiatives to improve teaching. And the federal government has established two major research and development initiatives to pursue the National Commission's recommendations—one for a National Center for the Study of Teaching and Policy and the other for a National Partnership for Excellence and Accountability in Teaching; these bring together researchers, professional associations, state and local education agencies, policy makers, and practitioners to develop knowledge and practice for both teaching and policy.

Twelve states are working collaboratively, with the support of their governors, state education departments, legislative leaders, and education leaders, to develop strategies for implementing the National Commission's recommendations. The states include Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Missouri, Montana, North Carolina, Ohio, and Oklahoma. Several others will join this group of partner states in the coming year. A group of urban school districts have also formed a network with the National Commission to develop strategies for recruiting, preparing, inducting, and developing excellent teachers at the local level: Albuquerque, Cincinnati, New York, Pasadena, San Antonio, San Diego, and others working with the National Commission through the Teacher Union Reform Network.

National organizations of policymakers and practitioners have endorsed the report and are working with their members on strategies to improve teaching standards and professional development. The National Governors' Association, National Conference of State Legislatures, and National Association of State Boards of Education have helped their members examine policy strategies to improve the quality of teaching. During 1996-97, at least 25 states enacted policies to raise standards and provide supports for teacher learning. They range from the ambitious Excellent Schools Act passed in North Carolina and similar bills in Ohio and Arkansas, which enact virtually all of the National Commission's recommendations not previously in place in these states, to more focused efforts to provide incentives for National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) Certification (now enacted in 26 states); create standards-based approaches to licensing, accreditation, and professional development using National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortia (INTASC), and National Board assessments (e.g., Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Ohio, Okla-

homa); launch professional development schools for teacher education (e.g., Maryland and Missouri); and provide grants for recruiting new teachers (e.g., Virginia, West Virginia).

The National Education Association (NEA) has endorsed peer review and assistance programs to improve teaching and strengthen teacher accountability, an idea already pioneered in a number of NEA and American Federation of Teachers (AFT) local districts. The AFT has worked to link student standards to teaching standards. The Association for Teacher Educators (ATE) developed its own set of standards for teacher educators, while the American Association of Colleges for Teachers Education (AACTE) launched several initiatives to help schools of education meet professional accreditation standards and to incorporate INTASC and National Board standards into their curricula. The Holmes Partnership and the National Network for Education Renewal are working to develop school/college partnerships for the simultaneous redesign of teaching and teacher education. A large number of local school districts have developed initiatives to improve teacher recruitment and teaching conditions as well as teachers' access to knowledge.

The National Commission's widespread impact may be partly attributable to timing. In an election year in which the U.S. public targeted education as its number one concern and ranked "good teachers" as the most important thing schools need to do a good job, it may be that the message found the most fertile ground available in years. In addition, the report benefitted from the accumulation over the last decade of a much sturdier body of research on teaching, teacher development, school reforms, and policy effects than was once available to support the ruminations of bodies such as this.

But generating interest and support for a set of ideas, as difficult as that may be, is much easier than seeing them through to reality. As each of the papers in this volume has noted, there are serious issues of individual and organizational capacity; coordination of efforts in a balkanized, decentralized system; and conflicts arising from competing constituencies and goals for education to be addressed in the years ahead.

To continue to make progress toward the goal of a caring, competent, and qualified teacher for every child, policymakers, practitioners, and researchers will need to develop a widespread public discourse about the issues of teaching and learning and how they can be supported. Although a significant start, it will not be enough for members of the profession to work together around a common plan aimed at much more powerful learning experiences for teachers and students. Continued research and dissemination about productive practices and policies will be critical to the long-run success of these ideas. Such things as National Commission recommendations are, after all, only best guesses about strategies deemed likely to succeed based on existing knowledge that is always to varying degrees inadequate.

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Furthermore, school policy is made by many who are not part of the profession and who must respond to others who hold views forged primarily in their own "apprenticeship of observation" as students in the past. Parents, business people, and the broad community will also need to understand how teaching is central to effective schooling and to the society's future. They will need to develop a commitment to powerful teaching for all students, not just the affluent and the lucky. They will need to understand what strategies can help create and sustain such teaching in schools organized for serious learning for all students, not just an elite minority.

Ongoing public education, that is, education of the public, will be essential to this work, as will continued collaboration among all parts of the profession at all levels of government. A healthy public discourse is critical. As I have argued elsewhere, without engaging parents, communities, and educators in sustained discussion about the schools we want and the teaching we need, no research-based reform can succeed widely or for very long.

What Matters Most offers a starting point for such a discourse. In times of perceived crisis, commissions are important vehicles for defining the problem—and hence for deciding in what arenas solutions will be sought. This important function can mobilize energies in useful directions, or it can lead to wild goose chases when problems are misunderstood. In the best instances, commission reports are broad-gauged efforts at organizing a public conversation. Although they are not the finely nuanced tools of researchers, they can direct the attention of a broad range of constituencies to new areas of work that, if well-conceived, can ultimately make a difference in public policy and the education of children. The virtue of such documents is that they can sometimes reach across the barriers that normally separate the conversations of practitioners, policymakers, and the public to seek more comprehensive, transformative changes in the structures and possibilities for teaching and learning. The danger is that their proposals can become reduced to the level of thinly understood rhetoric or treated as ideological dogma in the reform work that follows, particularly if there is not a concerted effort to engage and test the ideas such documents put forth.

When a major report is issued and reforms are proposed, there is always a probability that the ideas underlying recommendations will be understood only superficially or partially, that their interconnections will be ignored, and that their implementation will be pursued without a full conception of meanings and without all of the necessary parties engaged to secure success. For those who are, rightfully, proud of what they have already done, as well as those who have little taste for the necessary angst of change, there is also the common response, "We're doing that already." This response is often at least partly true, and perfectly appropriate. But delivered as a reflex to fend off the more difficult changes, it can also stop the process of completing the work that is yet to be done.

This has happened with the National Commission's work as it has with all other reform proposals. The papers in this volume display a sophisticated appreciation of the work that needs to be done. Of all the things they mention, the most central and the most difficult, in my view, are the efforts that will be required to ensure that all teachers have access to the knowledge and conditions they need to teach all children, especially when the understanding of teacher knowledge and the commitment to educational equity are so fragile in this society.

There is little public appreciation, and perhaps inadequate professional appreciation, of what it means to be truly prepared for teaching. Old images of teaching and teacher knowledge die hard. Many people, particularly those who have not taught, see teaching as imparting information, giving a test, and giving a grade. Teachers need only to know the information they will have to convey. Problematics about the learner and learning are absent in this vision of teaching as is an understanding of the extensive knowledge teachers would need to have to actually ensure that all children learn. In part, this is because high levels of learning for all students are not the goal. Most people still assume that the teacher "tells" it or assigns it; students learn or they do not; and that is the end of story. However, the outcomes of this—that some students learn and many fail—are no longer acceptable in today's society. Teachers must know how to teach so that students learn.

The other problem is that the hard work of teaching is invisible to many who make policy or develop programs for recruiting and preparing teachers, even when they intone the mantra that "all children can learn." Rather like the audience member at a symphony orchestra performance who sees the conductor's job as consisting largely of waving a baton, many observers of teaching fail to see the enormous amount of knowledge involved in designing a classroom that meets students' developmental needs and the school's cognitive and social goals; diagnosing student understandings, levels of development, intelligences, experiences, and needs; scaffolding experiences so that they cumulate to solid understanding; managing motivation and behavior; and working with parents and communities, often under stressful conditions. Even less well appreciated is the fact that teachers increasingly need to do all of this with students whose first language is not English, others who live in unhealthy and psychologically damaging situations, and still others who have special learning difficulties, and that their success depends on knowledge about biological, neurological, and linguistic aspects of learning and development not yet even treated in most teacher education programs.

Despite the fact that the National Commission presented extensive research on the importance of knowledge about learning and teaching for teacher effectiveness, many policy and program responses to *What Matters*

Most continue to ignore the importance of substantially increasing and deepening teachers' knowledge base. One class of responses emphasizes subject matter knowledge while ignoring knowledge about learning and teaching. Some policymakers argue, for example, for required majors for teachers in their fields with little attention to—or even at the expense of—education courses. The evidence is clear that this strategy will not substantially improve student learning, especially for those students who most need skillful, diagnostic teaching and developmental supports.

Another class of responses suggests that whatever it is teachers need to know—even if it is substantially more than what teachers have learned in the past—it can be acquired quickly and/or mostly on the job. The silliness of believing that the knowledge I have described could somehow be meaningfully conveyed in six weeks, or that on-the-job training could somehow inspire knowledge and practices that are currently missing from most schools where such training would occur, does not seem to impede this line of magical thinking. Such logic leads to the continued proliferation of short-term routes into teaching, sometimes under the banner of alternative certification, especially for urban school teachers. Ironically, these are the teachers who need more knowledge than others to meet successfully the challenges of their jobs, not less. Perhaps the logic is believable to policymakers because it applies to "other people's children." In addition to sending the most underprepared teachers into the most challenging jobs where many of them fail, this strategy exacerbates the teacher supply problem rather than solves it, since the evidence consistently shows that entrants from such routes leave teaching at much higher rates, with half or more of them gone from teaching within three years. Where such routes are touted as a way to recruit more minority teachers, the outcomes are doubly troubling: Rather than invest in the highest quality preparation available for teachers of color, so that they can become long-term leaders in the profession, they are written off, like the children in urban and poor rural schools they are expected to teach, as unworthy of much investment from a society that refuses to support the education of poor and minority youth.

The National Commission urged the continued development and expansion of high-quality alternative routes into teaching like those it highlighted for mid-career entrants and paraprofessionals. If the profession and policymakers are to sort out high-quality alternatives from continued excuses for shortchanging urban school children, there needs to be a highly visible, ongoing public articulation of the complex nature of teacher knowledge required for today's and tomorrow's schools and its incorporation into universally applied standards for preparation and licensing.

This exercise must also directly confront the question of how teacher education can be organized to provide access to powerful learning for prospective teachers. It has been 50 years since the current undergraduate

organization of teacher education was adopted, and at least 10 years since the typical weaknesses of that organization have been well-understood: fragmentation among areas of study, frontloading of courses prior to practice, inadequate time for sustained clinical experiences, and unhappy trade-offs between disciplinary preparation and education courses. In the last 10 years, many colleges have developed more productive models of teacher education that create extended clinical experiences in well-developed professional partnerships linked to more focused, carefully integrated coursework, supplemented by extended content area studies. The question is, will these more expensive strategies that require serious structural changes spread, or will they become short-lived innovations? Every profession has reorganized and extended its professional training as its knowledge base has grown during those 50 years. While this kind of change is difficult for many reasons, education schools have to look seriously at what it would take to prepare teachers who are really ready to teach in powerful ways.

Finally, there is the ongoing American problem of inequality that pervades every aspect of this work. Can we do the political work needed to ensure that all teachers encounter opportunities to learn to teach effectively? That all students get access to such teachers and to conditions in which high-quality teaching and learning can occur? The United States has developed a high tolerance for an endless stream of innovations that do not spread and for enormous levels of inequality in all of the educational opportunities it provides. The National Commission's research over this past year provides new data about the lack of equity in access to well-qualified, effective teachers for white vs. minority students and for affluent vs. poor students. The same is true for teachers' preservice preparation and professional development. These patterns are pervasive and chronic; they are structural in nature; and they create gross differences in access to knowledge with far-reaching effects for children's life chances.

Within districts, some students routinely get access to well-prepared teachers while others get utterly unprepared teachers, not just occasionally but year after year. Within states, there are wonderful teacher education and professional development initiatives that are accessible to small numbers of teachers. There are well-crafted standards for teacher licensing that are not applied to all entrants. There are norms of professional practice from which many schools and teachers are exempted. Where good practice is developed, it is generally rationed rather than spread. This time-honored tradition must be challenged if it is ever to end. This means that those favored by the current allocation of resources and opportunities must argue as strenuously for opportunities for their underserved colleagues and clients—and against short-sighted policies that preserve inequality—as those who now are denied access.

There is no reason that teacher expertise should continue to be a scarce resource that must be rationed. Virtually all teachers want to succeed, and the vast majority are hungry for knowledge that will help them do so. At long last, the field has credible notions about what that knowledge is and how to provide it. But ensuring that teachers get access to this knowledge—even when their clients have little clout and means—will require that adults in all parts of the education enterprise step up to the plate and hold themselves to standards. If the profession can put aside narrow self-interests that sustain mediocrity and inequality to become a voice for the children, the public support needed to make the difficult changes outlined in *What Matters Most* is sure to follow. The good news is that, for all the difficulties, policymakers and practitioners in every part of the enterprise—like Beverly Hall, Karen Gallagher, Marilyn Scannell, and Dennis Sparks—are stepping up to the plate.

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